

VZCZCXRO8481
RR RUEHAST RUEHHM RUEHLN RUEHMA RUEHPB RUEHPOD RUEHTM RUEHTRO
DE RUEHBR #0222 0511946
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 201946Z FEB 09
FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3602
INFO RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 3571
RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO 7302
RUEHRG/AMCONSUL RECIFE 9116
RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS BRASILIA 000222

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [AORC](#) [KSCA](#) [KTIA](#) [PREL](#) [SENV](#) [TPHY](#) [AY](#) [BR](#)

SUBJECT: ANTARCTIC: INVITATION DELIVERED; GOB SEEKING APPROVAL OF
MEASURE BEFORE APRIL MEETING

REF: A) 2008 STATE 74080, B) 2008 BRASILIA 1113,
C) 2008 STATE 109133, D) BRASILIA 142,
E) STATE 12890, F) STATE 15627

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¶1. (SBU) On February 18, Post delivered to the Ministry of Exterior Relations (MRE) the invitation letter (REFTEL E) to Minister Celso Amorim from Secretary Clinton to attend the ministerial-level event in Washington on April 6, 2009, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Antarctic Treaty and promoting international collaboration on polar science in follow-up to the then just-completed International Polar Year (IPY). The MRE has been aware of this event (REFTEL D), but has not yet decided who will head the Brazilian delegation.

¶2. (SBU) On February 20, the Ambassador met with MRE Under Secretary for Policy, Ambassador Everton Vargas. When the issue of Brazil approving the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) Measure 1 (2003), which establishes the Antarctic Treaty Secretariat, was raised per REFTEL E, Ambassador Vargas indicated that they would see what the MRE could do to expedite consideration by the Brazilian Congress. NOTE. Ambassador Vargas cautioned that the Brazilian Congress is an independent body that sets its own agenda. He pointed out that he himself was personally aware of this fact because he has been waiting a long time for the Senate's confirmation of him as Brazil's new ambassador to Germany, even though his confirmation is a high priority for MRE. END NOTE.

¶3. (SBU) On February 20, MRE informed Post that the Director of the MRE's Environment Department, Minister Luis Figueiredo Machado, will meet with Deputy Bonifacio de Andrada, the key member within the Constitution, Justice, and Citizenship Commission of the Chamber of Deputies, to press for expedited consideration and approval of ATCM Measure 1.

SOBEL